

Christmas 2017(2) - The Man with a Yielded Heart

The shock of bad news

Mat 1:18-25 ESV Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, ***before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.***

- She was found to be with child **from the Holy Spirit**
- **Wonder what his FIRST / NATURAL reaction was**
 - Shock, trust, loss of hope, anger, disbelief
 - This is a cause for divorce - **this could be cause for stoning**

He wrestled with what he should do

19 And her husband Joseph, being a **just man** and **unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.**

He *being just* wanted to do the right thing

- A just man - *equitable* (in character or act); by implication innocent, holy
- It comes from a word that means -- *right* (as self evident), that is, *justice* (the principle, a decision, or its execution)

He was JUST but MERCIFUL (unwilling and resolved are 2 very similar words in Greek)

- **UNWILLING** - an active voice - he was determined or committed to this action (although he had the right under these circumstances to make a public spectacle of Mary ***He would NOT put her to shame*** / public humiliation) - he was **absolutely committed to this**
- **RESOLVED** - a passive voice - he was **leaning toward or inclined** to divorce her quietly

He was not hasty - the LORD will direct honest seekers

20 **But as he considered these things**, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, **do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.**

- The angel addressed his fears - **DO NOT FEAR to take...**
- The angel confirmed that the baby was indeed "conceived by the Holy Spirit"

If we WANT TO DO THE WILL OF GOD - He will lead us there

- Psa 25:12 ESV Who is the man **who fears the LORD?** ***Him*** will he **instruct** in the way that he should choose.

- Pro 3:5-6 ESV Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not **lean on your own understanding**. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

The Lord gave Joseph a vision for this child that he formerly did not want

21 She will bear a son, and **you shall call his name Jesus**, for **he will save his people from their sins.**" 22 **All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:** 23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

- The LORD changed his perspective - he needed to see a different future - a different reality
- This baby is no longer an illegitimate child born of fornication
- **You will call his name Jesus - father's prerogative to name the child** (John Baptist's dad)
- He is the Messiah who will save me from my sins

And BY THE WAY - it is a fulfillment of a prophecy that is over 700 yrs old

Joseph found himself in the center of God's will -- fulfilling prophecy -- because he did not REACT in the flesh, but was willing to RESPOND to the LORD in dealing with a very difficult situation.

He was obedient - IMMEDIATELY

24 **When** Joseph woke from sleep, **he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him:** he took his wife,

- He Took His Wife

He once again allowed spiritual reason to overcome a natural human reaction

25 **but knew her not until she had given birth to a son.** And he called his name Jesus.

- What is every man waiting for on his wedding night?
- But knew her not until she had given birth to a son
- No one would be able to question this child was born of a virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit
- **He CALLED HIM JESUS** - just as the angel had told him

In his yieldedness he found himself in the center of God's will

Mat 2:13-15 ESV Now when they (3 wise men) had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "**Rise, take** the child and his mother, and **flee** to Egypt, and **remain** there **until I tell you**, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." 14 And he **rose** and **took** the child and his mother **by night** and **departed** to Egypt 15 and **remained there** until the death of Herod. **This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."**

Mat 2:19-23 ESV But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, "**Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel**, for those

who sought the child's life are dead." 21 And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. 23 And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, **so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.**

The point.

All of us have experiences in life where we can either

- A. **react from a purely human standpoint** -- or
- B. **we can allow the work of the Holy Spirit and his word to guide our response**

It is as if Joseph almost NEVER reacted in the way that we might typically expect -

1Ti 1:12-16 ESV I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 ***though formerly I was a blasphemer***, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and **the *grace of our Lord*** overflowed for me with the ***faith and love that are in Christ Jesus***. 15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world **to save sinners**, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ **might display his perfect patience** as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

- We are different people now - He saved us...
- His **salvation** is not just a REMOVAL of sin - it is a **CHANGED LIFE**

Eph 4:1-2 ESV I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to ***walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called***, 2 with all **humility** and **gentleness**, with **patience**, **bearing** with one another **in love**,

Php 1:27 ESV Only ***let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ***, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

Such WERE some of you

1Co 6:9-11 ESV Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 **And such were some of you.** But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.